

The Status of *Eremomela turneri* van Someren and the description of a new race from the Belgian Congo

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Eremomela badiceps turneri van Someren was considered until now as a race of *E. badiceps*. The type came from the Yala River (Kavirondo District, Kenya Colony). Only very few other specimens are known from the Western Kenya. Another one has been collected in the Nyondo forest near the Uganda-Congo border.

Some years ago I was surprised to meet *turneri* at Kalima (26°38'E, 2°41'S) and at Kailo (26°7'E, 2°39'S), in the Belgian Congo. These two localities are situated in the south-east corner of the great equatorial forest which is the normal habitat of *E. b. badiceps* (Fraser). It seemed to me that *E. turneri* must be considered as a species different from *E. badiceps*, but I could prove this only quite recently. Indeed my native hunter Kalinde Musiko collected at Kailo, in December 1957, some adults of *E. b. badiceps* and, last February, Kalinde succeeded in shooting from the same flock two specimens of *badiceps* and two specimens of *turneri*. These two species are breeding side by side at Kailo as shown by the state of the gonads of several males. I have no indication of interbreeding of the two populations and it must now be admitted that *E. turneri* van Someren is a good species.

This conclusion is confirmed by the examination of the foot of *turneri*. As *turneri* has a wing about 15% shorter than *E. b. badiceps*, it is quite natural to expect a stronger foot in *badiceps*. But *turneri* is characterised by a surprisingly weak tarsus with slender claws. It also seemed that the claws are shorter in *turneri*: about 4-5 mm. in my specimens of *turneri* for the claw of the first toe compared with about 5-7 mm. for *badiceps*. Dr. Charles Vaurie has confirmed for me that also the type of *turneri* has a weak foot and short claws. The difference is very striking and proves that the two forms are not conspecific. The bill of *turneri* is also of a different shape: more slender, and narrower at the base than in *badiceps*.

Dr. Charles Vaurie kindly compared one male of the Kailo birds with the type of *turneri* in the collection of the American Museum of Natural History. He concluded that the population discovered in the Belgian Congo represents a new race of *E. turneri*.

It is thus convenient to recognise the following two races of *Eremomela turneri* van Someren:

1. *Eremomela turneri turneri* van Someren.

Eremomela badiceps turneri van Someren, Bull. Brit. Ornith. Club, 40, 1920, p.92. Type locality: Yala River, Kavirondo District, Kenya Colony.

The type of *E. t. turneri* has the following dimensions: wing 49, tail 32, culmen (from base) 12,5 (measurements by Dr. Ch. Vaurie). The nominate race is known only from a very few localities in the Kavirondo District (Chapin, *in litt.*).

2. *Eremomela turneri kalindei* subsp. nov.

Type: ♂ adult, Kailo (Belgian Congo), 470 m, 15th February 1958. In the collection of the Musée du Congo belge (Tervuren).

Diagnosis: Similar to *E. t. turneri*, but the latter paler on head and mantle, distinctly browner, less slate coloured. Wing and tail of nominate *turneri* are also less dark, browner. The rufous of the forehead a little duller in *turneri* (*).

Measurements: Wing 4 ♂♂ 45,5–47 (46,3), 2 ♀♀ 43–47,5 (45,3); tail ♂♂ 28–30 (28,9), ♀♀ 28–31,5 (29,8); culmen (from base) 3 ♂♀ 11,5–12,0. Type: wing 46,5; tail 28; culmen (from base) 11,5.

kalindei seems to be smaller than nominate *turneri*, but the number of specimens of *turneri* is not sufficient to show it with certitude.

It is interesting to compare the dimensions of *E. t. kalindei* with those of *E. b. badiceps* secured in the same area: 7 ♂♀ collected at Kailo have 50–53 (51,6) for the wing and 32–34 (32,9) for the tail. Specimens from near Kamituga (28°11'E, 3°3'S) and from Namoya (27°37'E, 4°7'S) are a little larger: 12 ♂♀ wing 51,5–57 (53,8), tail 32–37,5 (34,4). But the difference is not significant.

Range: Known only from Kailo and Kalima (altitude about 500 m.). It is probable that the specimen collected by Fox in the Nyondo forest (Uganda-Congo border), in the collection of the British Museum, belongs to the race *kalindei*, for Mr. J. D. Macdonald who kindly compared it with a specimen of *kalindei*, found no appreciable differences.

Ecology: My specimens were shot on high trees which remained in clearings or in native plantations. *E. t. kalindei* forms parties with sometimes more than ten or fifteen birds. The association with *E. b. badiceps* encountered at Kailo is very remarkable. It seems that the food of the two species is the same: in two stomachs of *badiceps* I found a caterpillar, a spider and fragments of insects, in two stomachs of *turneri* two caterpillars and fragments of insects. It is probable that the meeting of *E. b. badiceps* and of *E. t. kalindei* on the same high tree at Kailo was due merely to an abundance of food convenient for the two species. The normal habitat of *badiceps* seems to be at lower levels of the trees than that of *turneri* and my native hunter confirmed me that *E. b. badiceps* is seen often even in second growth.

I have only imperfect indications of the breeding season. Two males taken in February and in August were in condition to breed. Mackworth-Praed and Grant record birds in breeding condition from July and August (Uganda). Specimens of *E. b. badiceps*, in breeding condition, were secured in the same area, south of the Equator, in March, July, August, December. This confirms the conclusion of Chapin that near the Equator nesting continues irregularly through most of the year.

E. t. kalindei is named after my native hunter Kalinde Musiko who for

*Dr. Charles Vaurie says (*in litt.*): "Il est évident que votre spécimen appartient à une autre race que *turneri*. En le comparant au type de *turneri*, ce dernier est plus pâle sur la tête et le dos, distinctement plus brun, moins "ardoisé"; les ailes et la queue de *turneri* sont aussi moins sombres, plus bruns, moins noirâtres; le châtain du front est aussi légèrement plus terne dans *turneri*."

many years has been successful in securing very interesting birds for the collection of the Musée du Congo belge.

I am most grateful to Dr. Charles Vaurie who made the comparison at New York and to Mr. J. D. Macdonald who examined the specimen collected by Fox. Dr. J. P. Chapin and Dr. H. Schouteden took as always a great interest in my collection and I am indebted to them for many useful suggestions. I would also like to thank Mr. R. E. Moreau for correcting my manuscript.

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A New Subspecies of *Parisoma layardi* Hartlaub

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In *The Ostr.*, 28, 1957: 235, I drew attention to the fact that the type of *Parisoma layardi* Hartlaub, *Ibis*, 1862: 147 was labelled "Clanwilliam" although the type locality given by the describer was "Zwartland, Malmesbury District." At that time, the question was of purely academic interest; but a comparison of recent skins from the extreme South-West Cape with those from further north shows that the former are perceptibly darker above than the latter; and that a bird from Citrusdal, south of Clanwilliam, agrees with the northern rather than the southern birds. It is interesting to note that this darker colour of southern birds had already been observed by Andersson, *Bds. Damaral.*, 1872: 78-9. The type of *layardi* is too faded for it to be safe to rely on colour alone, though it does agree with the southern birds in that respect. But there is also a tendency for southern birds to be smaller than those from further north, in which the smallest bird of 19 measured had a wing of 65 mm., whereas two out of the four South-West Cape birds have wings of less than this; and the wing of the type is 64 mm. Under the circumstances, therefore, I propose to regard the type as wrongly labelled and the originally cited type locality as correct. This means that the name *layardi* must be restricted to the birds of the extreme South-West Cape and that the rest of the population, except that in the Basutoland mountains, which has been described as *barnesi* by Vincent (1948), is without a name. I name it as under:

Parisoma layardi aridicola subsp. nov.

Differs from *P.l.layardi* Hartlaub in its lighter and slightly more olive colour above, about Deep Olive Gray of Ridgway, as against the Dark to